



# *BONHOMME RICHARD'S* *ALMANAC*

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*"I have not yet begun to fight!"*



## BONHOMME RICHARD RECALLS A YEAR OF FIRSTS

*Story By JO1 Robert Garnand and Photo By PHAN Daniel Jones*

On Sunday, August 15, while at sea in the Southern California operating area, crewmembers of USS BONHOMME RICHARD celebrated the first anniversary of the ship's commissioning. The ship's first year in commission has been filled with many achievements for the crew.

"In one short year," Captain Keith said, "we've accomplished a lot of firsts. During our transit to homeport we initiated our first group of new Chief Petty Officer selectees, our first time crossing the equator and our first time and maybe only time, of sailing around South America through the Strait of Magellan."

Another first noted by the Captain was the ship's first participation in a multi-ship exercise (UNITAS 98) less than a month after commissioning. He recalled port calls in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil and Valparaíso, Chile during the ship's transit from her commissioning site in Pensacola, Florida to her homeport in San Diego.

The Captain pointed out that during the 40-day transit around South America, the crew worked hard to prepare for CART, TSTA and FEP. The ship went on to complete FEP successfully in Hawaii within six months of commissioning.

Another first came in the spring of 1999 when BONHOMME RICHARD participated in her first major amphibious fleet exercise, Exercise KERNEL BLITZ 99, with various Navy and Marine Corps units. During the URBAN WARRIOR phase of the exercise in Northern California, the ship supported Marines training for 21<sup>st</sup> Century warfare scenarios.

The Captain commented on the ship's recent Post Shakedown Availability and the many



*The Captain and Lt. Jason Fitch hold a "Welcome Aboard" plaque which will be placed on the Quarterdeck to welcome guests. The A & J Mugs company of Pensacola, Fla., who made Plankowner plaques for the crew, donated this plaque on the occasion of USS BONHOMME RICHARD's first anniversary.*

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mission essential systems and spaces which were upgraded. "You've made a ship operationally ready for fleet operations in one year, which is record time. We'll be ready for deployment eight months earlier than any other LHD has been after commissioning. You should be proud of what you've done. John Paul Jones would be proud too," he said.

"On this day, the anniversary of our first year in commission, I'm ecstatic about where we are, what you have achieved, and where we are going," the Captain added.

In the second year of BONHOMME RICHARD's commissioned service, the ship will conduct exercises with elements of the BONHOMME RICHARD Amphibious Ready Group and the 15<sup>th</sup> Marine Expeditionary Unit in preparation for overseas movement in January 2000.

In closing, the Captain told the crew, "There isn't another crew in the United States Navy who can say they've done what you've done. I want you to know how proud I am of you and that I appreciate what you've accomplished."

Following the ceremony and the traditional cake cutting of a beautiful cake decorated by Mess Specialist Third Class Lisa Griffin, the ship commenced holiday routine. The warm weather off the coast of Southern California provided an excellent day for the crew to enjoy a steel beach picnic. Other events to help celebrate the commissioning anniversary included a talent show, a 3 on 3-basketball tournament and an evening movie in the Hangar Bay.

## **BONHOMME RICHARD'S ALMANAC**

**Capt. Douglas W. Keith, Commanding Officer**  
**Lt. Cmdr. Laurie Rye, Public Affairs Officer**  
**JCS(SW) James Jackson, Asst. Public Affairs Officer**  
**JOL Robert W. Garnand, Editor**

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The Captain and ACC(AW) Tonya D'Amore, the first Plankowner of USS BONHOMME RICHARD, cut the cake during a ceremony marking the first anniversary of the ship's commissioning.

# MP DIVISION'S PLANNING AND HARD WORK LEADS TO A SUCCESSFUL EARLY LIGHT-OFF

Story By JO1 Robert Garnand and Photo By PH3 Timothy Comerford

Part of getting a job done is planning, coordination and execution of assigned tasks along with leadership's involvement and relationships between workers.

Those key things helped USS BONHOMME RICHARD's Main Propulsion Division complete the many jobs needed to light off both of the ship's boilers four weeks ahead of schedule during the ship's recent Post Shakedown Availability (PSA).

It was also the first time an LHD under the command of Amphibious Group Three accomplished such a feat.

The Chief Engineer, Lt. Cmdr. Jess Matudio, said, "This is a noteworthy and showcase performance on the waterfront. Most newly commissioned LHDs," he added, "have three PSAs prior to their first deployment and BONHOMME RICHARD will have only had one huge PSA."

Matudio went on to say, "There was no room for delays. Ship's force thoroughly reviewed the production schedule submitted by five contractors."

In addition, Matudio said, "We had a Quality Surveillance Team checking and verifying the proper completion of each job. The preparation for early light off was a total ship's effort from every member of the Revolutionary Gator team."

The Main Propulsion Assistant, Lt. Jon P. Rodgers, said, "We had the first two passes of Superheater Tubes replaced in both boilers, modified both main engine low-pressure couplings along with over 100 warranty and trial card repairs. The troops," he added, "are extremely proud of their spaces and held the standard with the Navy contractors working in the spaces."

The first step towards accomplishing a successful early light off was planning everything the division needed to do during PSA. That included all the division personnel's regular duties, schools and leave periods as well as scheduled PSA jobs.

Machinist's Mate Chief Ken Dale, the Leading Chief Petty Officer of the Main Propulsion Division, said, "We had an aggressive leave and school policy. During PSA we had 20 to 30 percent of our people on leave or in schools and we still were able to finish four weeks ahead of schedule."

The next step was coordinating all of the elements they planned for the division during PSA. According to Dale, the Main Propulsion Division had 248 jobs on the Current Ships Maintenance Project (CSMP). "211 of 248 jobs on the CSMP were done by ship's force," he said, "and the rest were done by the shipyard or contractors."

Going hand in hand with coordination goes informing your Sailors and letting them know what needs to be done.

Machinist's Mate First Class Buz Phillips said, "We briefed our people on the big picture of what we needed to do in PSA and they got the job done."

Another vital element to this successful PSA was the daily meeting of ship's force, shipyard and contract workers to de-conflict jobs and resolve issues.

After the planning and coordinating comes the execution of the assigned

**MP Division Lights-Off Boilers Early** continued from Page 3

tasks. At this point the ship's force, shipyard or contract workers are doing the jobs.

"Everybody pulled together and did the assigned tasks that needed to be done to light off the boilers four weeks early," said Machinist's Mate Third Class Dan Kelly. "The Chiefs and First Classes were even able to get heads installed in the machinery rooms which is a great convenience for us," he added.

In every stage of the job the involvement of the leadership and relationships between workers was key.

The Main Propulsion Division's leadership planned division jobs so that the shipyard and contract workers could do their jobs at the same time. This allowed ship's force to monitor shipyard work and gain experience by getting on the job training while contract work was being completed.

That approach helped save time and helped get the division four weeks ahead of schedule for lighting off the boilers.

"While they were doing their jobs we were able to work on our jobs," Phillips said.

This also helped the working relationship between ship's force, shipyard and contract workers.

"The shipyard and contract workers worked well with us," said Phillips. "They came in and saw our high standards and they kept with them."

One Sailor from Main Propulsion Division even commented on how this particular PSA was different from other shipyard availability's he experienced in the past.

Machinist's Mate Second Class Mark Waldvogel said, "I've worked on other ship's while they were in the yards and we always had extended working hours. But during this PSA we worked the ship's normal working hours and we got the job done."

Even though the planning, coordinating and execution of assigned tasks are important parts for getting a job done, the people ultimately make it happen.

"The good working relationship we had with shipyard and contract workers and the outstanding job done by ship's force was a vital role in lighting off four weeks ahead of schedule," said Phillips.



# BONHOMME RICHARD SNAPSHOTS



Cutting the cake in the above picture are Captain Siedband (CNSP ACOS Maintenance), Captain Smith (CO SWRMC), CWO3 Jones (LHD 6 Food Service Officer), and Captain Keith (LHD 6 CO) and MSCM(SW) Thomas Ziznewski. (Photo by PHAN Scott Webb).



YNCS(SW/AW) John Lewis introduces his new daughter and future St. Louis Cardinals fan, Amanda, to SN Tammy Bartosh at the picnic area at Sea World. Sailors and their families took part in a USS BONHOMME RICHARD Day at Sea World in July. (Photo by PHAN Scott Webb).



Captain Keith meets with two students from Gerald R. Ford Elementary School on July 20. USS BONHOMME RICHARD Sailors participated in a "triangular adoption" with the city of Indian Wells, Calif. and the school. The ship and school will work together in a Partnership in Education program and the city of Indian Wells will honor the ship's Sailors who demonstrate outstanding performance. (Photo by PHAN Daniel Jones).

# REMODELED MESS DECKS OPEN FOR THE CREW

Story By Cmdr. Christopher Paddock

On August 5, 1999, USS BONHOMME RICHARD (LHD 6) hosted a "Grand Reopening" of her food service facility. The event was held in recognition for the support of numerous commands and companies that supported the renovation of the Mess Decks, CPO Mess, and First Class Petty Officers Mess.

During the recently completed Post Shakedown Availability, the NASSCO/Tecnico team modified "Poor Richard's" and the "Ace Cafe" to improve traffic flow and increase seating by twenty percent.

Commands honored and represented at the ceremony were Southwest Regional Maintenance Center, COMNAVSURFPAC, Supervisor of Shipbuilding San Diego, Navy Food Management Team, Afloat Training Group Pacific and the 32nd Street Naval Station Galley.

Also in attendance were representatives from the PSA Prime Contractor, NASSCO, and the Habitability Subcontractor, Tecnico.

"Poor Richard's" is named after Benjamin Franklin's book, "Poor Richard's Almanack." In French the title translates to "Bonhomme Richard".

Franklin was the U.S. ambassador to France when his friend, Capt. John Paul Jones obtained the ship DUC DE DURAS from the King of France for use in operations against the British during the Revolutionary War. Jones renamed the ship USS BONHOMME RICHARD in recognition of Franklin's work.

The "Ace Cafe" is named in honor of the second BON HOMME RICHARD, the aircraft carrier which illustriously served in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam, and was the first "Ace Carrier" of the Vietnam War.

## BONHOMME RICHARD TALENT SHOWCASE



AZ3 Melanie Braam and PHAN Scott Webb sing "16 going on 17" from the musical "The Sound Of Music" and AG3 Ricardo Cortinez sings a song he wrote titled "Love Letter." They were part of a talent show held on the first anniversary of the ship's commissioning. (Photo by PH1(AW) Cindy Harris).